

## The Ajijic Scrabble Club House Rules

(adapted from the Chilliwack Scrabble Club)

1. Try to be 5 or 10 minutes early since we begin playing at **noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays** at the Ken Gosh Pavilion at the Lake Chapala Society. We continue playing until 3 pm.
2. New players can use the "Important Words" reference sheets until they win their first game. They also get 3 free challenges per game. After winning their first game, they no longer can use the reference sheets, but still get 3 free challenges until they win their second game. In addition, new players do not receive an overtime penalty for the first five minutes of overtime. We really want to encourage new players to come and the few rules we have will be very loosely enforced for newcomers.
3. We play with the OWL2 dictionary which has been the official dictionary of the National Scrabble Association since March, 2006. The red-cover book "The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary 4th Edition" is NOT the dictionary of reference since it is an expurgated version of OWL2 and is not used in North American tournament play. However, it can be useful since it does contain minidefinitions of over 99.9% of the 2 to 8 letter words found in the OWL2 dictionary.
4. To begin every game, we draw tiles. Low tile starts, BLANK is low, then A.
5. Try to hold the bag slightly above eye level when drawing replacement tiles. And be extra careful to draw only the number of tiles you need. If you discover you have fewer than 7 tiles while there are still tiles in the sack, draw the needed number. If you discover you have more than 7 letters, announce the fact immediately to your opponent, then show **all** exposed letters to your opponent. The opponent selects the letter(s) of their choice to put back in the bag to bring your rack down to 7 letters. This is a stringent penalty, so please use care when replenishing your rack to not overdraw.
6. Your letters should remain on the rack except when placing them on the board or moving them around to see various combinations. Don't place your tiles on the table (except when throwing them in) as this prevents your opponent from verifying your tile count and also leads to lost tiles.
7. We currently have two timers, so any additional tables do not play with timers but have a 54 minute total time limit per game. Try not to use up more than your share of the time as a courtesy to your opponent. If you run out of time, both players will have the point value of the tiles on their rack deducted from their current score and the game ends. If your game ends early, you can silently observe other games in progress or take a break outside the playing area.
8. If you decide to throw back some of your tiles, place the tiles you wish to throw back face down on the table and announce the number of tiles you are throwing back. Next draw your new tiles from the sack and then put your old tiles in the sack and give it a good shake.
9. If you think your opponent is playing an illegal word (a phony) say HOLD. Your opponent will thus be alerted to not draw his replacement tiles from the sack. You can then think about it for a moment and, if you want, you can then say CHALLENGE. All words formed by the play will then be checked in the OWL2 dictionary and if they are not all found that player loses their turn. If all the words are good, the person making the challenge loses their turn. You can always say HOLD and then change your mind about challenging, but be sure to say HOLD or CHALLENGE before the opponent draws their replacement tiles which ends the turn. After playing your tiles and announcing your score, try to give your opponent a few seconds to say HOLD or CHALLENGE before eagerly drawing your new tiles.
10. Most importantly, have fun as that is the reason why we play!